

COLLECTING THE PRESIDENTS: GERALD FORD – IN MEMORIAM

by Melvin Morris

GERALD FORD (see figure 1) was this nation's 38th President (1974-1977). Before his recent death, he was honored with stamps, souvenir sheets, or miniature sheets from 18 nations with 26 different philatelic sets. The last 2 releases (both in 2006) were from Papua New Guinea (fig. 2) and the Maldives Islands (fig. 3).

Both areas noted the 80th Birthday of Great Britain's Queen, Elizabeth II, with ms of 4 picturing the Queen with 4 different American Presidents. Bill Clinton with his wife, now U.S. Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, and daughter, Chelsea, are pictured on the 1st stamp of the Papua New Guinea sheet of 4 (S1209a-d). Ford, on the 2nd stamp, is shown dancing with Queen Elizabeth II. The first stamp of row 2 depicts Ronald Reagan laughing heartily at some comment of the Queen. The fourth President, George W. Bush appears with her on the last stamp while the left margin features a recent portrait of the Queen.

The Maldives sheet of four stamps features the Queen at the time of her crowning in the left margin. John F. Kennedy with the Queen appears on the first stamp – strangely enough in a black and white foto. The second stamp pictures – also in black and white – Ronald Reagan and the Queen horseback riding. The second row – in color – depicts her and Gerald Ford dancing while the last stamp has George W. Bush escorting the Queen at a formal State Affair.

President Ford, who was in Office at the time of the Bicentennial celebrations in 1976, was honored, the same year, by the Central American nation of Nicaragua on a ss of 2 stamps (S2519). The left C10 stamp features George and Martha Washington and Martha's 2 children who George adopted as his own. The C10 stamp on the right of the ss pictures Gerald and Betty Ford, their daughter, 3 sons, and daughter-in-law. (fig. 4).

Turkmenistan, in 2000, featured all the American Presidents on 7 sheets of 6 120.00M stamps on each sheet. The 7th sheet of 6 (fig. 5) depicts Presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush (senior), and Clinton. The 2nd stamp of the 1st of 2 rows shows a portrait of President Ford and also has the President, and First Lady Betty, seated for a portrait in the White House with First Dog, Liberty, at their feet.

For all other "Ford" stamps already issued, it is recommended that you consult ATA's Handbook No. 154 – PRESIDENTS OF THE 20TH CENTURY ON WORLDWIDE STAMPS – WILLIAM MCKINLEY TO GEORGE W. BUSH by this editor and author (\$28.00 from American Topical Association, P.O. Box 57, Arlington, Texas 76004-00057) issued in Feb. 2006. Section XVI, beginning on page 88 covers ALL Gerald Ford issues.

The U.S. Postal Service – following past policy for postally honoring deceased Presidents, will probably release the Ford Memorial Stamp on his birthday, 14 July 2007 (Bastille Day in France). Ford was originally named

Rufus King but when his mother remarried, he was renamed for his new father who adopted him. Thus, we came that close to having a President who was a King!?!

It is to be expected that several other entities will also honor the late President with stamps in his honor.



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 3



Fig. 5



Fig. 1



Fig. 2